DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 343 925 TM 018 069

AUTHOR Crowe, Kevin, Comp.
TITLE Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and American College Test (ACT): Nevada Score Results--1989.
INSTITUTION Nevada State Dept. of Education, Carson City. Planning, Research and Evaluation Branch.
PUB DATE Oct 89
NOTE 21p.
PUB TYPE Statistical Data (110) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Achievement Tests; *College Entrance Examinations; Comparative Testing; *Educational Trends; Ethnic Groups; Graphs; Higher Education; High Schools; *High School Students; National Norms; *Scores; Standardized Tests; State Programs; Tables (Data); Testing Programs; *Test Results; Trend Analysis
IDENTIFIERS American College Testing Program; *Nevada; Scholastic Aptitude Test; Test of Standard Written English

ABSTRACT

The two primary college admission test batteries given in Nevada are the American College Test (ACT) and the tests of the College Board, the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the Test of Standard Written English (TSWE). This report provides an overview of the two tests and major trends pertinent to Nevada for 1989; however, because of the small number of students taking these tests, data are not intended for comparisons from year-to-year and from state-to-state. In 1989, as in the past, Nevada students scored higher than students nationwide on the Scholastic Aptitude Test. Nevada mathematics scores increased, while verbal scores declined slightly. Composite scores for Nevada students on the ACT declined slightly, but remained above the national average. At the same time, national composite scores declined slightly. In 1989, the number of students taking the ACT leveled off, after a significant increase since 1986. For the first time since 1982, the number of SAT examinations in Nevada declined, to levels not seen since 1986. This slight decrease came at a time when 12th-grade enrollment continued to increase. In all, 6,469 college entrance examinations were administered in Nevada in 1989. Four tables and five graphs illustrate trends for 1982 through 1989. (SLD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

K. Crowe

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED343925

SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (SAT) AND AMERICAN COLLEGE TEST (ACT)

***

Nevada Score Results - 1989

Compiled by
Kevin Crowe, Ed.D.

EUGENE T. PASLOV
Superintendent of Public Instruction

MARCIA R. BANDERA
Deputy Superintendent

Planning, Research and Evaluation Branch
KEVIN CROWE, *Director*

Capitol Complex, Carson City, Nevada 89710

TM018069

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (SAT)
AND
AMERICAN COLLEGE TEST (ACT)

***

Nevada Score Results - 1989

Compiled by
Kevin Crowe, Ed.D.

OCTOBER 1989

NEVADA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

June M. Herrmann, President

Carley Sullivan, Vice President

Frank Brown, Member

Janice A. Clarke, Member

John K. Hill, Member

Liliam Hickey

Kenneth Koester

Marianne Long

Yvonne Shaw

Mary Troy Ferguson, Student Representative

An Equal Opportunity Agency

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
1.	Introduction.	i
2.	About the SAT	1
	SAT Results	2
3.	About the ACT	6
	ACT Results	8
4.	Number of Nevada Examinees.	12

LIST OF TABLE AND FIGURES

Tables

1	SAT Average Scores Since 1979	5
2	ACT Score Averages for Nevada - 1982-89	10
3	Ethnic Background - ACT Examinees - 1982-89	11
4	Ethnic Performance - ACT Composite Scores 1989	11

Figures

1	Nevada SAT Verbal Results - 1982-89	3
2	Nevada SAT Math Results - 1982-89	4
3	Nevada ACT Composite Results - 1982-89	8
4	Nevada Examinees ACT & SAT - 1982-89	13
5	Total Number of College Entrance Examinations Administered Annually in Nevada - 1982-89	14

I. INTRODUCTION

The two primary college admission test batteries given in Nevada are the American College Test **(ACT)**, which has four curricular subsections, and the College Board of Admissions Testing program **(ATP)**, which includes the Test of Standard Written English **(TSWE)** and the Scholastic Aptitude Test **(SAT)**.

The publishers of both of these test batteries produce annual summary reports including state and national scores. These reports are made available during September. The NDE does not receive information about other individual states. This report is intended to provide the reader with an overview of the two tests and major trends pertinent to Nevada.

The Department maintains much more extensive demographic data about the Nevada and national examinee pool. People interested in such technical information should contact the Planning, Research and Evaluation Branch at (702) 885-3130.

It should be stressed that the students involved generally plan on attending college. **Because these tests apply only to a portion of the high school student population, comparisons from year-to-year and state-to-state should be made with caution.**

2. ABOUT THE SAT

The Admissions Testing Program of the College Board includes four major components:

The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) -- The **SAT** is a 2 1/2 hour, multiple-choice test that measures developed verbal and mathematical reasoning abilities related to successful performance in college. **SAT** scores are intended to supplement the secondary school record and other information about the student in assessing readiness for college-level work. Student performance on the **SAT** is reported on a scale of 200 to 800, with a standard error of measurement of approximately 30 to 40 points. The verbal portion of the **SAT** also yields subscores in reading comprehension and vocabulary, which are reported on a scale of 20 to 30, with a standard error to measurement of approximately 4 points.

The Test of Standard Written English (TSWE) -- This is a 30-minute, multiple-choice test administered with the **SAT**. The **TSWE** evaluates students' ability to recognize standard written English. **TSWE** scores are intended to help place students in appropriate freshman English courses. The scores are reported on a scale of 20 to 80; however, scores above 60 are reported as 60 + because the test is not designed to make distinctions above that level. The standard error of measurement on the **TSWE** is approximately 3.5 points.

The Achievement Tests -- Designed to measure knowledge in specific subject areas and the ability to apply that knowledge, the Achievement Tests are independent of particular textbooks or methods of instruction. Although the types of questions change little from year to year, the tests do evolve to reflect general trends in high school curriculums.

Achievement Tests are given in English Composition, Literature, American History and Social Studies, European History and World Cultures, Mathematics Level I, Mathematics Level II, French, German, Hebrew, Latin, Spanish, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. All are one-hour multiple-choice tests, with the exception of a version of the English Composition Test that contains an essay assignment in addition to multiple-choice questions. Scores of all the Achievement Tests are reported on a scale of 200 to 800, with a standard error of measurement of approximately 30 points.

The Student Descriptive Questionnaire (SDQ) -- The **SDQ** contains questions about the students background, academic record, extracurricular activities, and plans for college study. The **SDQ** is designed to enable individual students to present to colleges a broader picture of themselves than in conveyed by test scores alone. Students voluntarily respond to the **SDQ** as part of the registration process for the **SAT** or Achievement Tests. The **SDQ** information included in this report is useful in monitoring trends and understanding the background of the college-bound students who take the **SAT**.

NEVADA SAT RESULTS

This year, as in the past, Nevada students scored higher than students nationwide on the Scholastic Aptitute Test (SAT). Nevada mathematics scores have shown an increase from last year while verbal scores have declined slightly. At the same time, the national scores remained the same or declined slightly. See Figures 1 and 2, and Table 1.

Figure 1

SAT

Test Results from 1982 to 1989

VERBAL

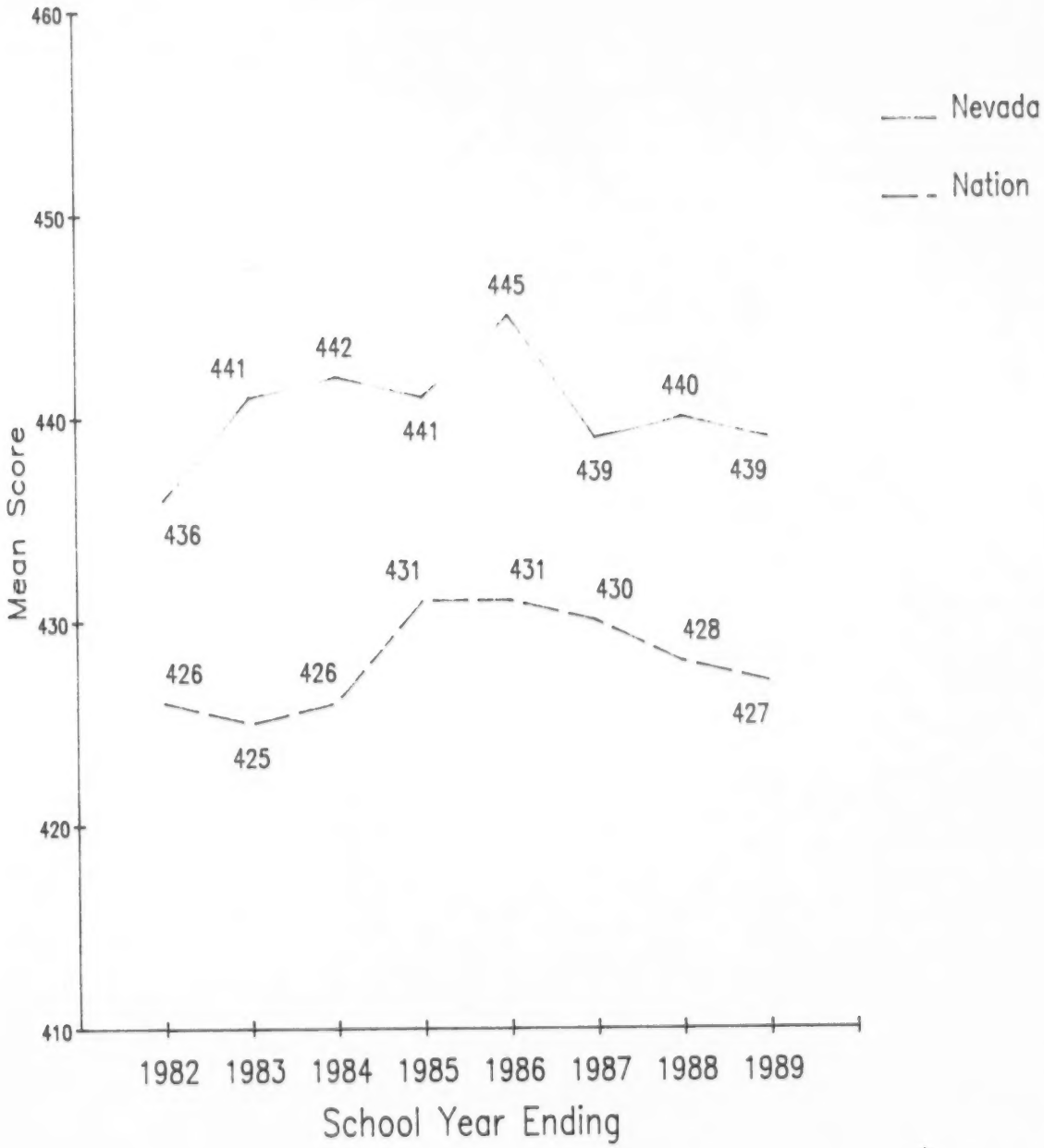

Figure 2

SAT

Test Results from 1982 to 1989

MATHEMATICS

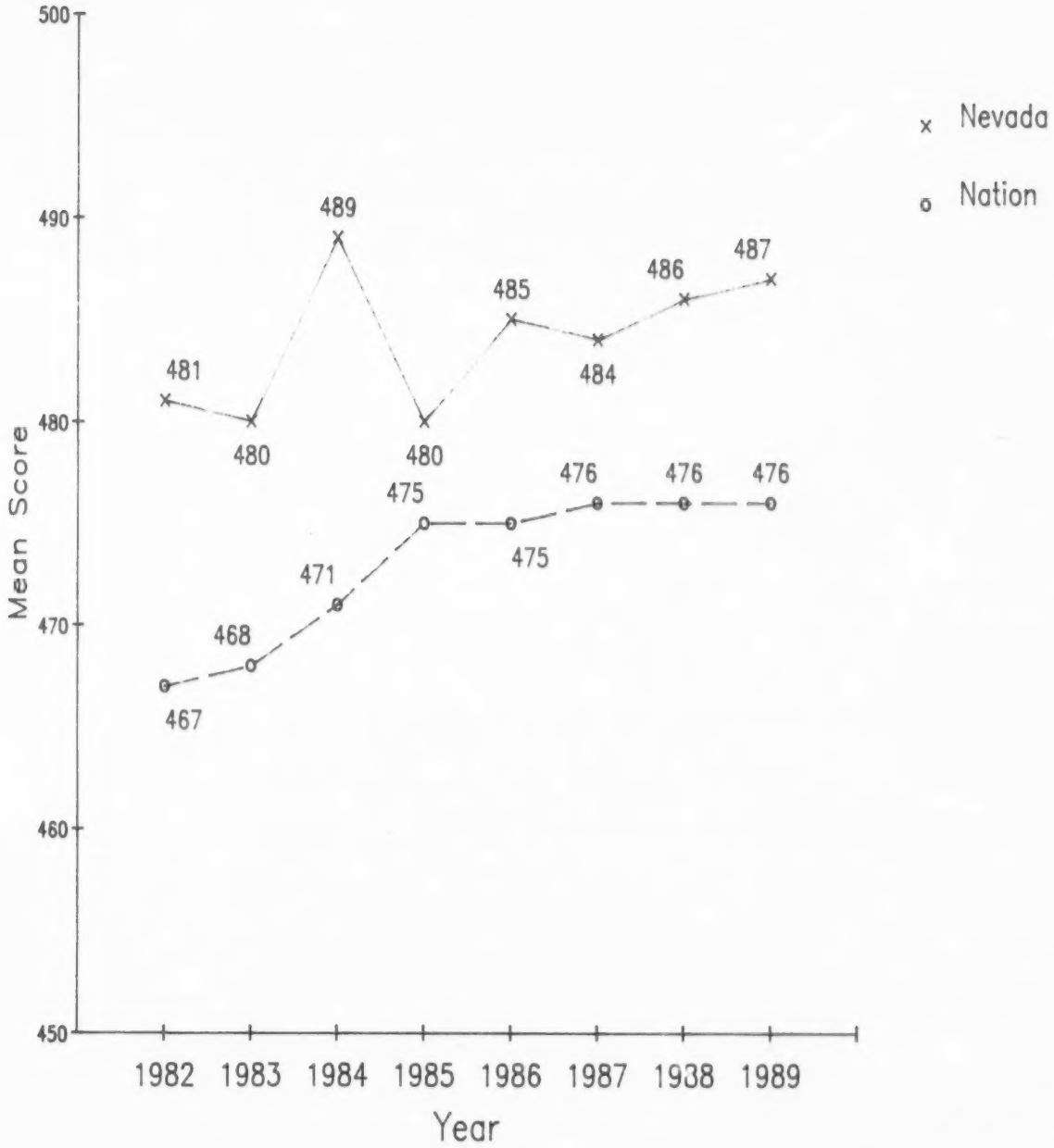

TABLE 1

SAT AVERAGE SCORES SINCE 1979

YEAR	SAT VERBAL NEVADA	NATION	SAT MATH NEVADA	NATION	TSWE NEVADA	NATION
1979	449	427	486	467	44.4	42.5
1980	449	424	485	466	44.9	42.4
1981	445	424	487	466	44.5	42.2
1982	436	426	481	467	43.8	42.3
1983	441	425	480	468	44.1	42.3
1984	442	426	489	471	44.8	42.6
1985	441	434	480	475	43.7	42.7
1986	445	431	485	475	44.6	42.6
1987	439	430	484	476	44.5	43.0
1988	440	428	486	476	44.4	43.0
1989	439	427	487	476	44.1	42.6

	STANDARD DEVIATIONS VERBAL NEVADA	NATION	STANDARD DEVIATIONS MATHEMATICS NEVADA	NATION	STANDARD DEVIATIONS TSWE NEVADA	NATION
1986	101	110	118	121	9.9	10.9
1987	101	111	118	122	10.1	11.0
1988	101	109	116	123	10.0	10.8
1989	102	111	115	121	9.9	10.9

3. ABOUT THE ACT

In order to fully understand your High School Profile Report, you will need some information about the **ACT** Assessment Program, which is the source of all the data in the report.

The **ACT** Assessment Program consists of the Student Profile Section and the **ACT** Interest Inventory, which students complete when they register for the Assessment, and four timed tests of educational development taken at a test center under standardized conditions. The tests of educational development--English Usage, Mathematics Usage, Social Studies Reading, and Natural Sciences Reading--emphasize problem-solving and reasoning abilities rather than the rote recall of facts. The Student Profile section collects biographical data and information about the student's postsecondary plans, special academic and out-of-class achievements, aspirations, and high school course work. The Interest Inventory measures six interest dimensions: Science, Arts, Social Service, Business Operations, Business Detail, and Technical. Data in the High School Profile Report are obtained from the students' test results and from their responses to selected items in the Student Profile Section.

TEST CONTENT AND FORMAT

The English Usage Test (75 items, 40 minutes). This test measures the student's understanding of the conventions of standard written English in punctuation, grammar, sentence structure, diction and style, and logic and organization. The test does not measure the rote recall of rule of grammar, but stresses the analysis of the kind of effective expository writing that several prose passages with certain portions underlined and numbered. For each underlined portion, four alternative responses, including "NO CHANGE," are given. The student must decide which alternative is most appropriate in the context of the passage.

The Mathematics Usage Test (40 items, 50 minutes). This test measures the student's mathematical reasoning ability. It emphasis the solution of practical quantitative problems that are encountered in many postsecondary curricula and includes a sampling of mathematical techniques covered in high school courses. The test emphasizes quantitative reasoning rather than memorization of formulas, knowledge of techniques, or computational skill. Each item in the test poses a question with five alternative answers, the last of which may be "None of the above."

The Social Studies Reading Test (52 items, 35 minutes). This test measures the comprehension, analytical and evaluative reasoning, and problem-solving skills required in the social studies. There are two types of items: the first is based on reading passages, and the second on general background or information obtained primarily in high school social studies courses. All items are multiple choice with four alternatives. The items based on the reading passage required not only reading comprehension skills, but the ability to draw inferences and conclusions, to examine the interrelationships and import of ideas in a passage, to extend the ideas expressed in the passage to new situations, to make deductions from experimental or graphic data, and to recognize a writer's bias, style, and mode reasoning. The discrete information items ask the students to apply what they have learned in high school social studies courses to familiar, new, or analogous problems.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Natural Sciences Reading Test (52 items, 35 minutes). This best measures the interpretation, analysis, evaluation, critical reasoning, and problem-solving skills required in the natural sciences. There are two types of items: the first is based on reading passages, the second on information about science. All items are multiple choice problems. Descriptions of scientific experiments and discussions of current scientific and distinguish among the purposes of experiments and discussions of current scientific theories are the most common formats. The items require the students to understand and distinguish among the purposes of experiments, to examine the logical relationships between experimental hypotheses and the generalizations that can be drawn from situations, to propose alternate ways to conduct experiments, and to judge the practical value of the ideas and theories presented in a passage. The discrete information items ask the students to apply what they have learned in high school science courses to familiar, new, or anlogous problems. Although these items require the understanding of significant facts, they require only minimal algebraic and arithmetic computations.

The Composite Score on the **ACT** Assessment is the arithmetic average of the scores earned in English, mathematics, social studies, and natural sciences.

In October 1989, ACT introduced the Enhanced ACT Assessment, a revised version that consists of tests in English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science Reasoning. Instead of five scores, students who take the Enhanced ACT will receive twelve -- a score for each of the four subject areas, a composite score, and seven subscores in specific content areas of English, Mathematics, and Reading.

During 1988-89, more than 1,300,000 students participated in the ACT Assessment.

NEVADA ACT RESULTS

As seen in Figure 3, 1989 Nevada students composite scores declined slightly remained unchanged since 1988. At the same time, the national composite score decreased slightly.

Tables 2 and 3 illustrate the numbers and relative performance of different groups on the ACT.

Figure 3

ACT

Test Results from 1982 to 1989

COMPOSITE

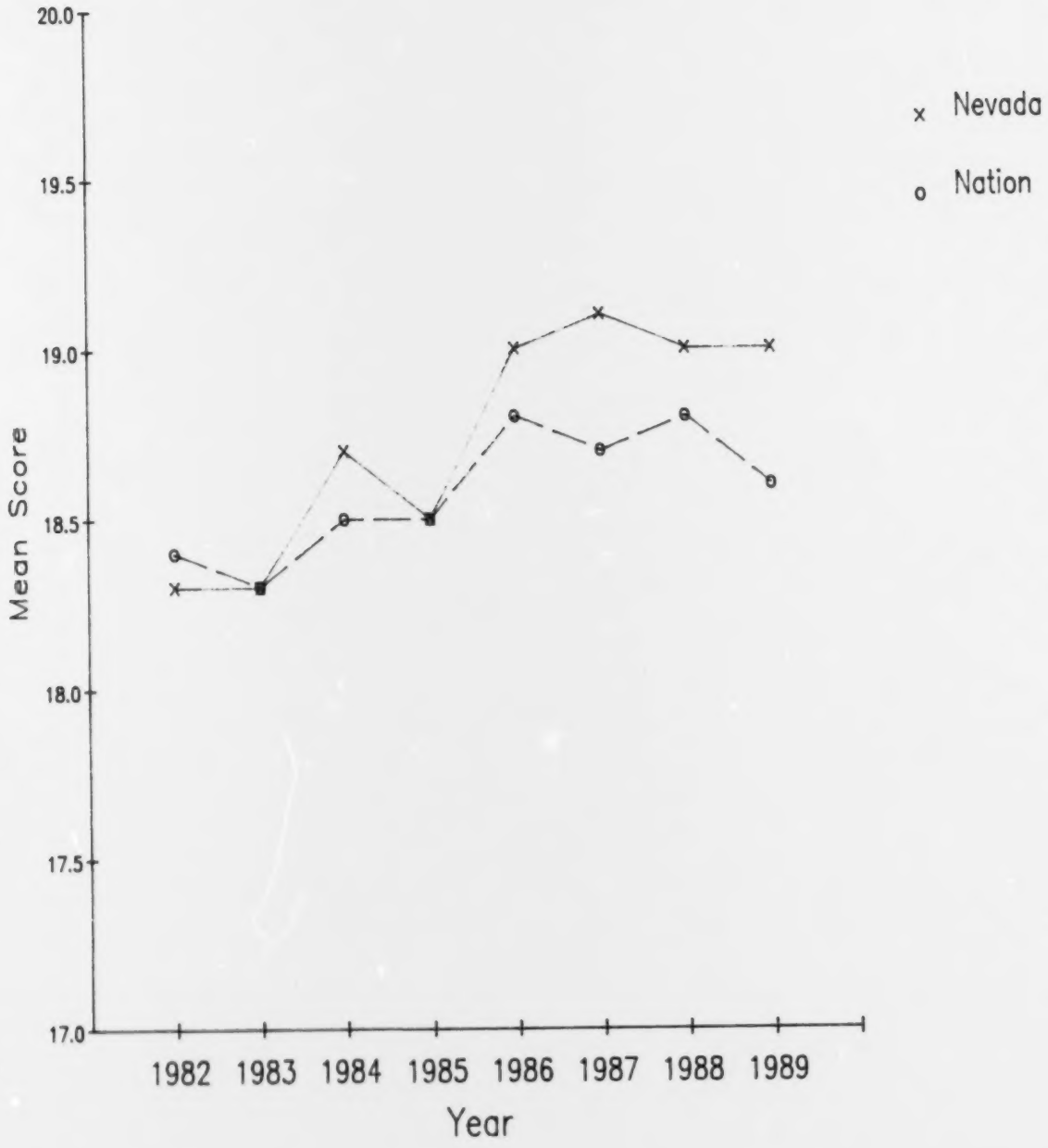

TABLE 2

AMERICAN COLLEGE TEST (ACT) SCORE AVERAGES FOR NEVADA STUDENTS
1982-1988

Year	Number Tested	Eng.	Math	Social Sciences	Natural Sciences	Nevada Composite	National Composite
1982	4241	17.8	16.9	17.5	20.6	18.3	18.4
1983	4644	17.9	16.9	17.3	20.8	18.3	18.3
1984	4235	18.3	17.6	17.8	20.9	18.7	18.5
1985	3931	18.1	17.0	17.5	21.0	18.5	18.5
1986	3561	18.9	17.4	18.2	21.2	19.0	18.8
1987	3677	18.8	17.7	17.9	21.5	19.1	18.7
1988	4033	18.6	17.3	17.9	21.5	19.0	18.8
1989	4033	18.7	17.6	17.7	21.4	19.0	18.6

ACT SCORE AVERAGE FOR NATIONAL SAMPLE 87-88

Year	English	Math	Social Sciences	Natural Sciences
1987	18.4	17.2	17.5	21.4
1988	18.5	17.2	17.4	21.4
1989	18.4	17.1	17.2	21.2

TABLE 3

ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS OF ACT TESTED NEVADA STUDENTS

ETHNIC BACKGROUND	1983 %	1984 %	1985 %	1986 %	1987 %	1988 %	1989 %	CHANGE 88-89 %
Afro American/Blacks	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	0
American Indian	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	0
Caucasian/White	81	82	81	82	82	79	79	0
Mexican/Spanish American	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	0
Oriental American	4	4	4	3	5	5	5	0
Puerto Rican	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	0
Other/No Response	4	3	3	3	4	4	4	0

TABLE 4

ACT COMPOSITE SCORE AVERAGES FOR DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS (1988)

ETHNIC GROUP	# OF NEVADA STUDENTS			COMPOSITE SCORE AVG %		
	1988	1989	% CHANGE	1988	1989	% CHANGE
Afro-American	185	176	-5	15.2	14.8	-.4
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	66	78	+18	15.7	15.8	+.1
Caucasian	3124	3058	+3	19.4	19.4	0
Mexican American/ Chicano	113	118	+4	17.4	16.8	-.6
Asian American	206	202	-2	19.7	19.2	-.5
Puerto Rican/Cuban/ Hispanis	68	80	+17	17.5	17.7	+.2

NUMBERS OF NEVADA EXAMINEES

Figure 4 illustrates the changing numbers of students who are taking the ACT and/or the SAT in Nevada.

ACT: (Figure 4): suggests that after significant decreases between 1983 through 1986, the number of ACT examinees has leveled off. This leveling off comes after increasing significantly since 1986.

SAT: (Figure 4): SAT trend data suggests that, for the first time since 1982, the number of SAT examinations administered to Nevada students has declined to levels not seen since 1986.

Figure 5 illustrates the combined total number of tests administered, (both the ACT and SAT). Figure 5 suggests that, after substantial increases since 1986, less students took college entrance examinations in 1989 than in the previous year. This is the first decrease in total numbers of Nevada students choosing to take either test since 1983. This slight decrease comes at a time when 12th grade enrollment continues to increase.

Figure 4

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

Number of Nevada Test Takers

1982-1989

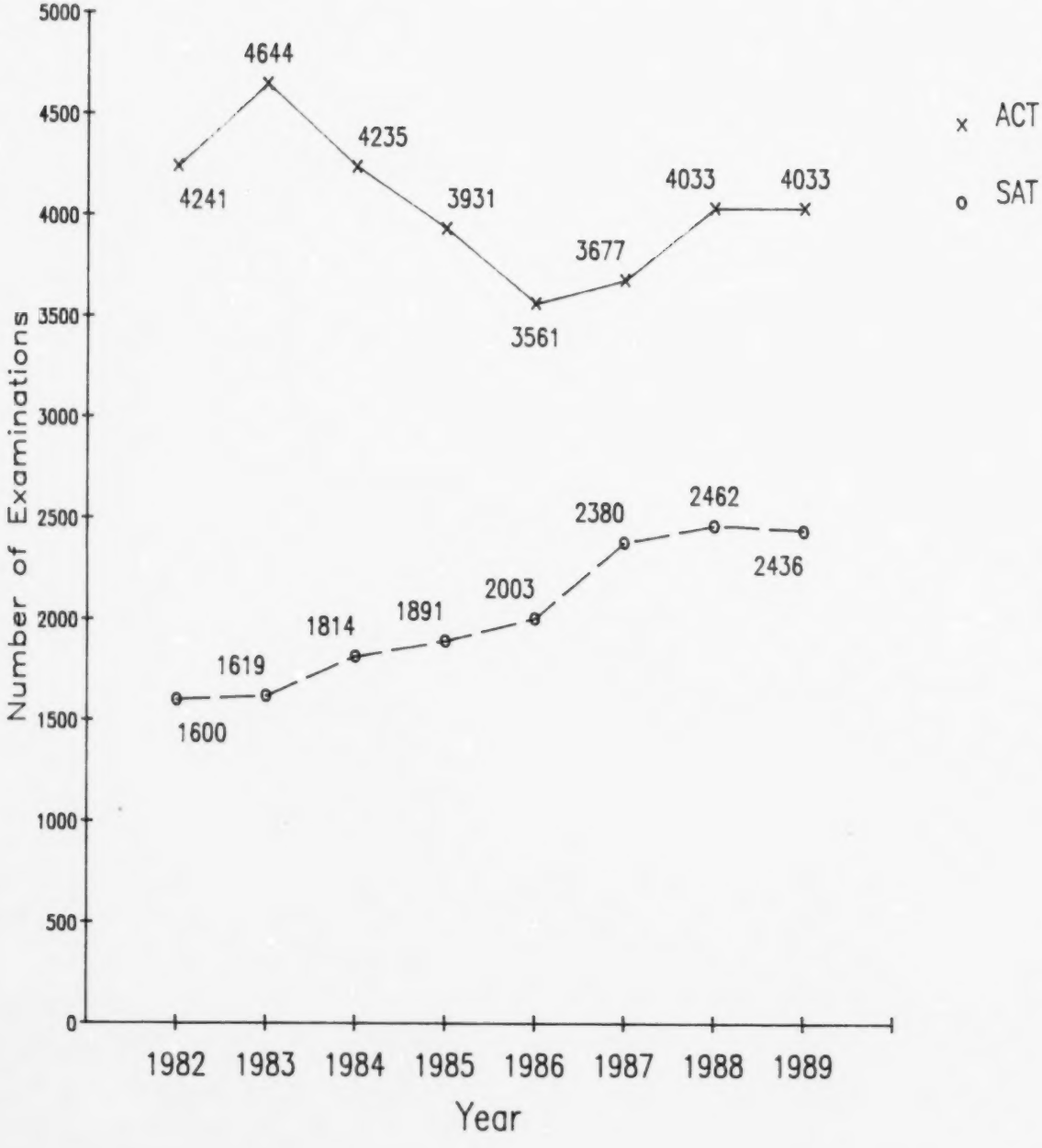

Figure 5

Total Number of College Entrance Examinations

Administered in Nevada

1982-1989